

## ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WILDLIFE & FRESHWATER FISH MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, May 28, 2019

Richardson & Robbins Building Auditorium  
89 Kings Highway, Dover, Delaware  
Phone 302-739-9912, FAX 302-739-6157

### ADVISORY COUNCIL

1. Edward A. Montague, Chair
2. Garrett Grier, Jr., Vice Chair
3. Raymond F. Burris
4. Neal Dukes
5. Nathan Hudson
6. Joe C. Johnson
7. Steven Kendus
8. Dale R. Scuse (Absent)
9. F. Thomas Unruh

### DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

1. Director David E. Saveikis
2. Chief Drew Aydelotte
3. Justyn Foth
4. Robert Brennan
5. Rob Hossler
6. Joe Rogerson
7. Amy Marie Ottinger
8. Dana Patone

### PUBLIC

8 Visitors

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Montague at 7:00 pm.

#### **Agenda Item 1. Approval of Minutes (Chairman).**

A motion was made by Councilman Unruh, seconded by Councilman Grier and the Council voted unanimously to approve the April 30, 2019 meeting minutes as written.

#### **Agenda Item 2. 2019 Turkey Harvest (Justyn Foth).**

Justyn Foth, Ph.D., waterfowl and game bird biologist, presented the 2019 Delaware wild turkey season harvest results. The presentation included a brief synopsis of the history of wild turkey in Delaware, hunting season dates and annual harvests. The 2019 season yielded 564 birds of which 439 (78%) were toms, 115 were jakes and 10 were bearded hens. This harvest was only a slight reduction (1.2%) from last year's harvest of 571 birds. Fourteen percent of this year's birds were harvested on public lands, which was slightly less than the 17% harvested on public lands in 2018.

#### **Agenda Item 3. Summary of Hunting, Trapping and Wildlife Regulation Changes under Consideration (David E. Saveikis).**

Director Saveikis provided a summary of numerous proposed hunting, trapping and wildlife regulation changes under consideration by DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife. The themes included regulation changes to expand hunting and trapping opportunities, provide wildlife and habitat conservation and make various administrative and definition changes. These proposed changes will be published in the State

Register of Regulations this summer, and it takes several months to promulgate and adopt the regulations after providing public notice and the opportunity for public comment. Director Saveikis explained the regulation adoption process is implemented under the Administrative Procedures Act separate from the General Assembly's legislative process.

After Council discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Johnson, seconded by Councilman Hudson and the Council voted 5-2 recommending including in the proposed regulation changes allowing military veterans and active military personnel to hunt waterfowl, deer and turkey during the established respective youth days.

After Council discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Burris, seconded by Councilman Unruh and the council voted unanimously recommending eliminating rabbits from the proposed regulation change to allow .17-.22 caliber rimfire firearms to take raccoons, opossums and rabbits.

After Council discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Burris, seconded by Councilman Kendus and the council voted unanimously recommending including in the proposed regulation changes extending the pheasant season and creating a chukar season to mirror the proposed longer pen-raised quail season (Monday before Thanksgiving through the second Saturday in February) during which pen-raised released quail may be harvested with a permit.

After Council discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Unruh, seconded by Councilman Dukes and the council voted 6-1 recommending removing the proposed regulation change to eliminate gunning rig

regulations requiring landowner permission to hunt waterfowl within specified distances from the shoreline of the Delaware River and Bay between the Appoquinimink River and the Murderkill River.

Director Saveikis sought Council's input on extending the turkey season from four weeks to five weeks. After discussion, Council voted unanimously recommending to not include in the proposed regulation changes an extension of the turkey hunting season to five weeks, citing the recent slight decline in turkey harvest and that there was not enough data to support extending the season.

Council proposed to change the verbiage from "bearded birds" to "males only" when defining turkeys legal for harvest. The Division was asked to research what verbiage neighboring states use to address the "males only" harvest of turkeys and the success of that verbiage.

Director Saveikis thanked the Council for their input, and indicated that the Division would strongly consider their recommendations in developing the proposed regulation changes that would be submitted for formal promulgation and additional public input, with the Council able to further comment in this separate, formal regulation promulgation process under the Administrative Procedures Act.

#### **Agenda Item 4. Director's Update (David E. Saveikis).**

Director Saveikis provided an update on the following relevant legislation initiated and introduced by the Delaware General Assembly: H.B. 97 to allow non-resident, full time students in a public or private college within Delaware to purchase a Delaware hunting, trapping or fishing license at the same fee charged a resident; H.B. 156 to allow non-residents who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States and have at least a 60% service connected disability to be license exempt to hunt, trap and fish (similar to the current exemption for residents); and S.B. 100 to increase shot and pellet size permitted in air guns up to .25 caliber.

#### **AGENDA FOR THE 6/25/2019 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**

Council asked the Division of Fish & Wildlife to provide the agenda for the next meeting, with the Division subsequently developing the following agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes from May 28, 2019 Council Meeting (Chairman).
2. Delaware Sport Fish Tournament 2019 (Bruce Cole).

3. Land Acquisition Update (Kerri Yandrich).
4. Expansion of the Designated Trout Stream Area on Pike Creek
5. Director Update (David E. Saveikis).

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Kendus, seconded by Councilman Dukes and unanimously approved by the Council to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 pm.

Sincerely,



Dana Patone  
Recording Secretary